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## THE GOLD HUNTERS.

A Story which Smacks of the Days of Captain Kidd.

The Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, Saturday press says: "About a year ago a number of men living in Honolulu were moved by a spirit of adventure and desire for gold to such an extent, that they determined to exchange the banana and cigarette life of the islands for the life of a rover of the sea. To this end they purchased for \$3000, the small brig Ninito, with which they proposed to visit the south-east coast of Africa and barter with the untamed savages of that far off country, and, if possible, mine in the gold fields there. While this pretty little plan was being elaborated, a new direction was given to the thoughts of the promoters of the scheme by the arrival of a Swedish sailor named Pernien. He learned of the scheme and immediately interested himself in it, but proposed to navigate the Ninito and her crew of adventurers and fortune-hunters to some northern coast where the somewhat unusual combination of gold digging and salmon fishing could be successfully worked. Pernien told such a glowing story that the company of adventurers, mostly mechanics and ignorant of the mysteries of navigation and the wonders of Siberia, placed him at the head of their expedition, with a share in all possible profits. The Ninito was loaded with salt for the salmon, flour to trade with, and mining tools and fishing tackle purchased in San Francisco, and on the 21st of last March sailed from Honolulu with a full crew, and eight of the stockholders of the "East Siberia Fishing and Mining Company" (as the expedition was officially named) as passengers. The passports of those on board were found to be for Vladivostok, Siberia.

When the brig was out of sight of the islands, the captain and mate forced the passengers to do sailors' work, and the captain and a passenger named Nelson, formed a conspiracy to run to the nearest island, leave the passengers, sail to the next port, and sell the entire outfit and brig, pocketing the proceeds as a reward for their ingenuity. This scheme failed for a time, and on the fortieth day out the little brig sailed into the port of Hakodati, island of Jesso. There Nelson, while on shore, attempted to rob another one of the passengers, named Mason, of a watch. Mason attempted to kill Nelson in order to bring about an open rupture which should decide whether the conspirators or the passengers should thereafter manage the expedition. In this amicable and highly diplomatic endeavor he was unsuccessful, and the brig continued until Vladivostok was reached.

There the dupes of the Swede's scheme found that no mining could be done without a permit from St. Petersburg, and Mason "gave away" the captain's conspiracy to some English-speaking person he met. For this, Pernien handed Mason over to the officer of a Russian man-of-war on a charge of attempt to commit murder. The Russian did not hold him, as the offense was committed in a Japanese port. Mason then accepted an offer of Pernien to sell his interest, and worked his way to this city.

## Freeing a Woman from Slavery.

The following extract, translated from *Al Moghreb at Aska*, a journal published in Morocco, will show that even poor slaves are not entirely devoid of human sympathy: "A short time ago a slave woman was set free by her master as a reward for her excellent behavior and industry. She began work, and her wages, added to what she had received from her former master, enabled her to save a moderate sum of money. One day, passing through a street, she heard the auctioneer selling a negress. The conscience of the former slave was touched and her sympathy aroused by the remembrance of her former life. In a spirit of sublime charity she bought the slave, took her to her own house, and declared her free, and the two women are now working contentedly together.—Chicago Times.

## Shaker Costumes.

A decided change in the dress of Shakers has taken place in the last twenty years. Skirts were formerly quite plain; now they are laid in lengthwise folds an inch in width. In other words, they are kilted, and in the soft grays and stone colors, with the silk or muslin neckerchief crossed over the bodice and the clear cap shading—not concealing—the whitening locks of hair, the effect is that of a gentleness and serenity suited to the age of a majority of the wearers. The little girls wear white caps, instead of hankerchiefs, exactly like those worn by country girls in England half a century or less ago.

## CUSTOMS IN CHIHUAHUA.

Social Etiquette in Mexico—How the Young People Conduct Themselves.

A letter from Chihuahua, Mexico, to the *Chicago Inter Ocean* says: "In the centre of the town is the Plaza Mayor, which is an open plat of land about the size of one of the squares of Chicago. It is one of Chihuahua's most attractive places, being filled with flowers and surrounded by a fine walk, lined with seats, where both natives and foreigners gather twice a week and listen to the excellent music of the military band. Music is given every Thursday and Sunday evening, from 8 until 10 o'clock, and these are called music nights. Sunday evening is the principal music night of the week, and then the town can be seen at its best. It is then a very interesting place, being filled with gaily dressed ladies and gentlemen of all ages, nationalities and countries, who make this the pleasure evening of the week. There is none of the loud talking or laughing so common in the United States, all being quiet and subdued, and all seeming to be enjoying themselves. It is certainly a very pretty sight to see the brilliantly dressed ladies and gentlemen walking among the flowers, keeping step to the music of a fine orchestra, and all in the cool and invigorating air so common to this climate. The custom of the country is, for the ladies, both young and old, to promenade the plaza by walking round and round, always going from right to left, while the gentlemen all walk from left to right, thus meeting each other twice in going around the plaza once. This custom dates back to "time immemorial," and is a part of the etiquette of the country. There is no country in the world where etiquette is so strictly observed as in Mexico, and the following are some of its peculiarities: The windows of all residences in northern, and I might say in all Mexico, are barred with an iron or wooden grating, projecting a few inches toward the sidewalk, and forming a sort of balcony. The object of this is to separate all gentlemen not properly introduced and vouchered for from meeting the ladies of the house. No gentleman is allowed to call upon a lady until after he has been personally introduced by some intimate friend or relative of the family, who becomes responsible for the visitor's conduct. This is never done until his character, personal habits, and the standing of his family are known. If the introduction and standing of the party are satisfactory, he is then permitted to call upon the lady of the house, and she can receive him only in the presence of some member of the family or trusted friend, who is expected not to leave the room while the caller is present. If the caller is a young man and he calls upon a young lady, then her mother or some lady friend of the family is always present, and she does most of the entertaining. When the young man calls three or four times it is presumed that he knows what he wants, and it is therefore expected that he will at once seek the hand of the lady in marriage, but if he fails to declare his intentions, then the father or the oldest son, if living—if not, then the uncle or some other member of the family—invites the gentleman to come forward and state the object of his visits, or discontinue them. The young lady is never allowed to ride or drive alone with a gentleman; neither is she allowed to walk upon the street, visit any friend, nor to attend a public ball, except she is accompanied by some member of the family or a trusted lady friend. Neither gentleman nor lady is expected to converse or promenade the street or plaza, or to exchange any but the common courtesies. After being introduced, the gentleman is always expected to recognize the lady first, and if he fails to do that soon after his introduction it is understood that he desires to cut her acquaintance. At a public ball, or if at dinner at the house of a friend, then both lady and gentleman may dance or converse at pleasure, for then they are in the presence of mutual friends. If the gentleman desires to form the acquaintance of a lady, or has not been properly introduced and vouchered for, then he can only admire her at a distance, send billets doux, or at best talk to her through the bars of her window, which is only large enough to admit the hand and arm. It is a common sight to see young Mexicans standing before the windows of the houses with one hand on the window bars and the other holding the inevitable cigarette, laughing and chatting as if he were the most privileged of wooers."

"I say, Jenkins, can you tell a young tender chicken from an old tough one?" "Of course I can." "Well how?" "By the teeth." "Chickens have no teeth." "No, but I have."

## THE SPOOPYDYKES.

A Rumpus Raised About the Loss of a Swallow-Tailed Coat.

"My dear," said Mrs. Spooopydyke, backing away from her refreshment table and regarding the effect with her head very much on one side: "my dear, what are you going to wear when you make calls on new year's?" "Clothes, I suppose," returned Mr. Spooopydyke, looking up from his paper. "Why, has the fashion changed recently about wearing clothes?" and Mr. Spooopydyke regarded his wife with an anxious look of inquiry.

"But you should wear your swallow-tail coat by all means," continued Mrs. Spooopydyke. "All the gentlemen wear swallowtail coats on new year's day now."

"Well, if you think you are going to strap me up in a two tined coat and start me around this town looking like the head waiter of a dollar-and-a-half summer resort, you're just as badly left as a one armed man at a church supper! I may be dodged as enough to hop around to the various old hen roosts, wishing the contents a happy new year, but when you melt me into a clothespin jacket it'll be when reason no longer holds her seat in this dodged brain!" with which application of a trite quotation Mr. Spooopydyke settled himself back and contemplated his wife with a lofty glance of superiority.

"Of course, if you don't want to," replied Mrs. Spooopydyke, soothingly, "there won't be any great objection raised to your business suit. Besides, now that I think of it, the moths got into your dress coat, and I don't think it is fit to be seen," and she put a few finishing touches on her table, and admired it from another standpoint.

"Let's see it!" demanded Mr. Spooopydyke, springing from his chair and making for his closet, closely followed by his wife. "What's the matter with it? What's the moth got to do with it? Who put moths in it?" and Mr. Spooopydyke rummaged around and fired his clothing in all directions in his vain search for the particular garment. "Where is it?" he howled, scattering his wardrobe broadcast. "Have the measly moths eaten it all up? Didn't they leave even a button hole? Show me my coat! Bring out the split in the tails! If there's nothing else left, give me one last, fond glance at the arm holes!" and Mr. Spooopydyke kicked his best trousers to the ceiling, followed them with a vest, which he supplemented with a pair of boots. "Show me the great North American moth fodder! Fetch forth unparalleled diet for the measly moth! Are we a nation?" yelled Mr. Spooopydyke, jamming his thumb in the door and hopping around the room with the injured digit in his mouth. "Dodged the door!" he howled, bringing it a prodigious kick that bent his leg up under him like a school girl's.

"Did you hurt yourself, dear?" asked Mrs. Spooopydyke, dodging the flying boots and clothing. "Does it look as if I'd hurt the door any?" demanded Mr. Spooopydyke, jamming his thumb in his armpit, and bending double with the pain. "Does that door give the impression of having smashed its thumb anywhere? Why didn't the moths eat the door? Hoist 'em out and give 'em a feed!" And Mr. Spooopydyke caught the offending wigwag by the knobs and tugged until he was out of breath.

"Perhaps it isn't so bad after all," murmured Mrs. Spooopydyke, following him around the room in a fruitless effort to catch up with him.

"Prhaps it ain't!" roared Mr. Spooopydyke, holding his thumb out at arms length. "Praps you've got some scheme for making it worse! Oh, go ahead! Don't mind me! Take the thumb, friends, and do your worst!" And Mr. Spooopydyke dropped into his chair and groaned with wrath. "It's a good thing for this family that I can control myself!" he howled. "If I was like most men the lot on which this house stands would be a good place to build!" with which solemn prophecy Mr. Spooopydyke sprang to his feet, kicked the chair into the obnoxious closet and snorted aloud.

"I didn't mean your thumb, dear," explained Mrs. Spooopydyke. "I was talking about the coat. May be the coat isn't in such a bad condition as I supposed it was at first."

"Think they left a pocket anywhere?" inquired Mr. Spooopydyke, with a grimace, half pain and half anger. Or praps you thing that since the moths eat the coat I can wear the moths! Bring them out! Hold 'em up while I climb into the sleeves! That's your idea? That's the notion that's been bothering you so long?"

"I don't know but what you can wear the coat, anyway?" chirped Mrs. Spooopydyke, looking up cheerfully, and opening the door of her closet, where she had carefully hung the coat after sponging it that very day. "You can look at it, anyhow," and she

brought it out, looking as new and fresh as when he bought it."

"Then there's something you don't know?" he grumbled, eyeing his rejuvenated garment with a critical eye. "If all you don't know could only be dumped in together, what an idiot asylum it would make for some young and growing territory. Taking you all in all, you only want an air pump and a glass side to be a dodged vacuum. Gimme the coat," and Mr. Spooopydyke grasped his garment, and threw it over his wife's work basket for safe keeping, and went to bed wrapped in a cloud of growls.—*Stanley Huntley.*

## Why January 1 is New Year.

Every one knows that January 1 is the beginning of the year, but not every one knows why it is so. It marks no natural division of time nor any event in the world's history which would give it such distinction. The winter solstice—that is, the period when the sun appears to reach its greatest southern declension, or furthest point south of the equator, occurs December 22, nine days before the new year begins. The summer solstice, another natural division of time, occurs on June 22, a point nearly as far removed from the new year as the calendar permits. The natural divisions of time which suggest themselves at once to the practical observer are the winter and summer solstices and the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, periods at which the days and nights have equal length or their greatest difference. These having been neglected, the moon's phases would seem to have been most likely to be fixed upon. But imperial Caesar, who in 46 B. C. gave us our new year, governed by caprice or reasons of the most temporary duration, departed from the former Roman system of reckoning the year from the winter solstice and made the commencement on January 1 for no better reason than the desire to inaugurate his reform with a new moon.

The Cæsarean system, devised by the aid of Sosigenes, constituted the ordinary year of 365 days and the fourth or extraordinary year of 366. The subdivision of the year into months was similar to the present system. This division of time, though imperfect, is still practiced in Russia. The error was in giving the year 365 1/4 days, which is too much by about eleven minutes. Pope Gregory XIII ordered October 5, 1582, to be called the 15th, and that all centennial years which are not multiples of 400 should not be leap years, which omission of three leap years in every 400 years gives the civil year an average length of 365 days, 5 hours, 49 minutes and 12 seconds, which still exceeds the true solar year by a fraction of a second, which amounts to a day only in 3,866 years. The present, or Gregorian, system is used by all Christendom, except Russia. It was adopted by England in 1752 and by France in 1564.

Prior to the reformation of the calendar by Julius Cæsar, and many centuries afterward, the methods of dividing time were various, complicated and imperfect. The moon was the planet which influenced and governed most nations, and gave rise to universal variance between the natural and civil year. The religious feasts of the Christian church are still regulated by the moon. The Council of Nice provided that Easter, the central point by which all other days in the church calendar are fixed, should fall on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after March 21. The complex method of making these lunar periods correspond with the civil year is evidence enough of the difficulty of division of time by the "inconstant moon." Our week and month are not natural divisions of time, though some ingenious efforts have been made to trace some connection between natural phenomena and the period of seven days.

## Superstition About Hair.

The ideas of savages and of our compatriots about the mysterious connection which is supposed to exist between the cut lock of hair and person to whom it belonged, are shown to be often identical. It seems that in Ireland "it is held that human hair should never be buried, because at the resurrection the former owner of the hair will come to seek it;" and that it ought not to be lost, "lest some bird should find it and carry it off, causing the owner's head to ache all the time the bird was busy working the hair into its nest." A somewhat similar belief lies at the root of a cure for whooping cough current in Northamptonshire and Devonshire. A hair of the patient's head is placed between two slices of buttered bread and given to a dog. "The dog will get the cough and the patient lose it."

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## MOMENT'S MATTERS.

The organ in the Stewart memorial Cathedral, Garden City, L. I., is the largest in the world. It has 115 stops and 7,152 pipes, and cost over \$100,000. It is distributed in four distinct and widely-separated localities of the cathedral, all placed under the control of one performer by means of the Roosevelt electric action. Steam power is employed to inflate the bellows, double engines of ten-horse power being used. The other large organs of the world are the one in the Royal Albert hall, London, which has 111 stops; the Cincinnati organ, 98 stops, and the Boston music hall organ, 84 stops.

The Mormon settlement of Stringtown, in Idaho, extending from Clifton to Oxford, is five miles long. The homesteaders' residences are within 300 feet of each other, and the farms are mere strips of land about 250 feet in width. The land was taken up in this manner to give every settler a frontage on the public road. Something very like this may be seen on the banks of the River Raisin, in Eastern Michigan, where the old French pioneers, who settled there before the war of 1812 built their cabins at intervals of a few rods along the banks of the river, which was their highway. By this means they gained such measure of protection as was afforded by the proximity of neighbors and gratified their love of social intercourse.

An Englishwoman has walked 1,500 miles in 1000 hours. There must have been a woman with a new bonnet at the other end of the route.

An exchange has an elaborate article for amateur vocalists. "How to begin to sing." How to get them to quit is still an unsolved problem.

Mrs. Homespun, who has a hard time every morning to get her young brood out of their beds, says she cannot understand why children are called "the rising generation."

"I am afraid you will come to woe," said an old lady to a young gentleman. "I have come to that already," was the reply. "I want your daughter." The old lady opened her eyes.